



The fine heart of listening.

2007-2008
ANNUAL REPORT

CRISIS INTERVENTION AND PUBLIC INFORMATION
SOCIETY OF GREATER VICTORIA
(1971-2008)

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REPORT FROM THE CHAIR – Echo Kulpas

This was an eventful year at NEED and one filled with change. However, some things remain the same. Again this year, our committed, empathic and well-trained volunteers have provided 24-hour support to lonely, isolated and sometimes desperate adults and youth in community. I would like to thank our Volunteer Manager, her assistant and all of the volunteers who worked so hard to decrease down time and ensure overnight coverage. Although some of the mechanics of how we provide support change over time, the need for warm, non-judgmental support remains.

Suicide remains the second leading cause of death for youth in our society. The Board's Program Committee has spent the past year looking for more effective ways to reach this at risk population. Thanks to funding from the United Way, we have teamed up with Pacific Centre to pilot a web-based project that is youth friendly. Youthspace will allow youth to get on-line support from volunteers, post questions on a forum or have confidential e-mail conversations with a counsellor at Pacific Centre. Mark Nixon is leading the project and brings technical and peer support expertise. Board, staff and volunteers are excited to open this new avenue for youth to access free, confidential and anonymous support.

This year brought more changes for staff at NEED. Linda Stanton retired after 25 years of service and we had a wonderful party for her at Adrianna's Cocina Mexicana. As always, Linda put the volunteers first and requested that friends and family donate to the Linda Woodward Stanton Fund rather than contribute to a retirement gift. The fund totals over \$4,300 and will be used to provide learning and development opportunities for volunteers.

Staff have also voted to unionize and we are currently in contract negotiations with BCGEU. The bargaining process has allowed us to step back and look at the unique service we provide and increased our appreciation for the breadth and depth of experience that staff bring to NEED. We look forward to negotiations as an opportunity to find creative ways to meet staff needs and promote retention.

I am pleased to report that funding continues to be stable thanks to the efforts of our Executive Director. On the fund raising front we again enjoyed the generous support of Sharon Wadsworth, a former NEED trainer, and her partner, John Fisher who donated the profits from the Rhythm and Blues Festival. In addition, Thrifty Foods donated 5% of the profits of Smile cards used by friends of NEED for a total of \$2,000 this year. The Smile card program has helped to raise awareness of NEED's service as well as financially supporting our programs.

As it was my first year as Chair of the Board I have been on a steep learning curve. I am grateful to all of the volunteer Board Members and our Executive Director, Jane Arnott, for their support and patience. I would also like to thank the staff and volunteers of NEED for another amazing year of service in our community. You are the heart of NEED.

In 2007-08, a monthly average of 78 NEED volunteers took a total of 12,683 calls on all its Lines

24-HOUR CRISIS AND INFORMATION LINE

2007-2008 CALL STATISTICS

Statistical information on the volume and nature of calls to NEED is of interest to the public and other service providers in our community.

The Crisis and Information Line offers a generic telephone support service to the public and there is a wide and varied range of concerns expressed by callers. The types of incoming calls reflect our mission to provide immediate emotional support, crisis intervention, and information on community resources.

Total Incoming Calls

To the 24 Hour Line (386-6323)	12,058
To 1-800-SUICIDE	431
Average Calls per day	34
Volunteer Hours On the Lines	11,394

<u>Call Type</u>	<u>Percent of Total Calls</u>	<u>Average Call Length</u>
Crisis	15%	18 minutes
Information	10%	5 minutes
Support	65%	19 minutes

A monthly average of 78 dedicated volunteers provided an annual total of 11394 hours of volunteer coverage.

Calls requiring the intervention of an outside emergency resource remained stable at 8.9%. These calls require volunteers to use their critical assessment and decision making skills and are evidence of the vital role the crisis line plays in providing these essential links to our community's emergency resources.

1-800 SUICIDE LINE

26% of all 1-800 SUICIDE calls answered in Victoria were primarily concerned about suicide and self-harm.

1-800 SUICIDE is a service that has been offered throughout British Columbia since September, 2004. This is a toll-free, confidential, 24 hour service to people who are suicidal, who are concerned for someone that might be suicidal, or who have lost someone to suicide. All calls are answered by highly-trained crisis line volunteers, supported by a team of professionals.

NEED Crisis and Information Line has partnered with four other Crisis Lines in BC to ensure that calls to 1-800 SUICIDE are seamlessly connected to the first available crisis line in the network.

<u>Call Type</u>	<u>Percent of Total Calls</u>	<u>Average Call Length</u>
Crisis	29%	20 minutes
Information	8%	4 minutes
Support	42%	21 minutes

NEED volunteers responded to the challenge of a significant increase in calls on this specialized line, answering 431 calls.

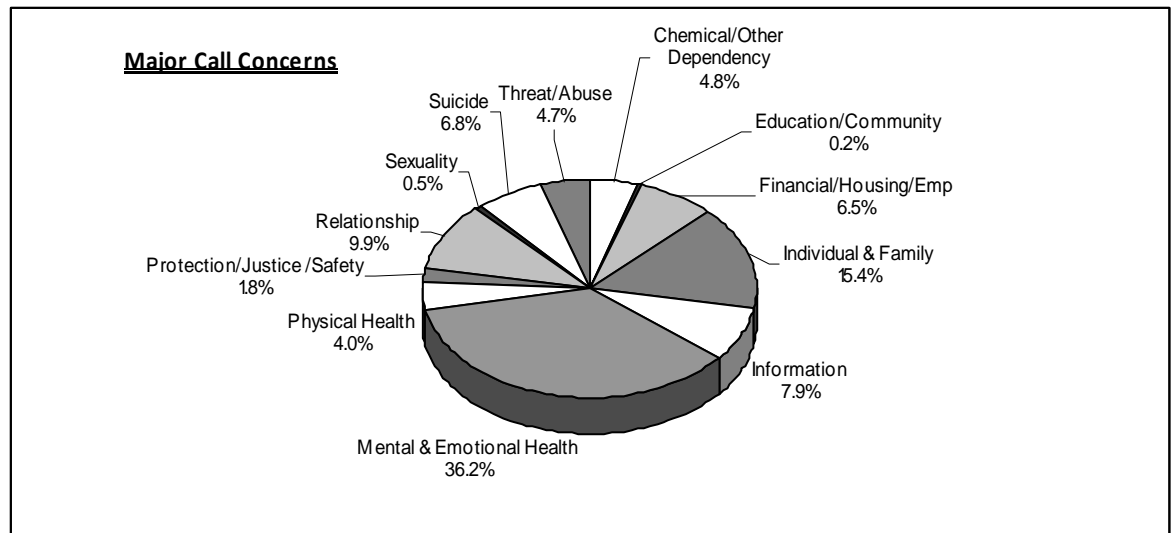
Despite the greater number of crisis level and suicide related calls on the 1-800-SUICIDE line, the percentage of callers requiring additional crisis intervention services at the end of the call remained low (7%), affirming the volunteer's ability to engage callers, accurately assess risk and reduce distress.

"A few years ago a NEED volunteer saved my life when I overdosed on pills by making sure I got to the hospital in time – for this, and for all NEED volunteers time and dedication, I am profoundly grateful."



CALLER CONCERNS

Caller concern statistics are based on "known calls" and do not include hang-ups or wrong numbers.



Statistics reveal consistent long term trends in the types of incoming calls to NEED.

Mental/Emotional Health:

Caller concerns in the area of Mental/Emotional Health continue to be the largest category of total calls received on the 24-Hour Line, making up 36% of total calls. These calls relate to major mental illness, depression, bereavement/loss, acute emotional distress, loneliness and social isolation.

Volunteers continue to provide ongoing emotional support to callers who are living with a mental illness. NEED volunteers also continue to support the friends, spouses, and family members of persons dealing with mental health concerns. Third party calls about Acute Mental Illness and about Long Term Mental Illness have continued to increase yearly for the past 6 years.

Suicide and Self-Harm Related Calls:

6.8% of total calls relate to suicide and self harm. These calls are serious and potentially life threatening in nature. Volunteers are professionally trained to conduct thorough suicide risk assessments and often consult or refer callers to Emergency Mental Health Services where deemed appropriate.

People also call the Crisis Line if they have concerns about a friend or family member who may be suicidal, or feeling at risk of harming themselves. Call levels for third party suicide and self harm remain consistent with previous years.

Dependencies

This group of calls represents 4.8% of total calls and includes those callers struggling with issues related to alcohol, substance abuse and problem gambling. Concerns about street drugs, alcohol use and gambling have doubled over the past few years.

Financial/Occupational/ Housing

This cluster of calls relates to employment, housing, and poverty. The number of calls in this category represents 7% of total calls. Concerns about emergency shelter rose significantly in each of the past two years. Calls about employment also increased this year.

Individual/Family Life

Calls in this category increased significantly, representing 15.4% of total calls. Types of calls captured include concerns regarding adoption, parenting, home care, foster care, extended family members, gay/lesbian/bisexual and transgendered issues.

Physical Health

Physical Health related calls decreased over the past year. Calls about disability and pregnancy issues remain stable.

Threat/Abuse

Calls received in this area are serious in nature and require a thorough risk assessment and a possible referral to additional resources. This year calls related to threat and abuse constituted 4.7% of all calls. Other call concerns included in the category are elder abuse, marital/partner abuse, abuser, and concerns related to the neglect and self-neglect of vulnerable adults. NEED Crisis and Information Line is one of the public access points for the reporting of concerns for vulnerable adults who may be experiencing abuse, neglect or self-neglect. It is also the after hours community access point for the Sexual Assault Response Team.

Relationships

Callers concerned about marital/partner relationships or other relationships such as friends, colleagues or neighbours represent 10% of total calls, as this category has for over 12 years.

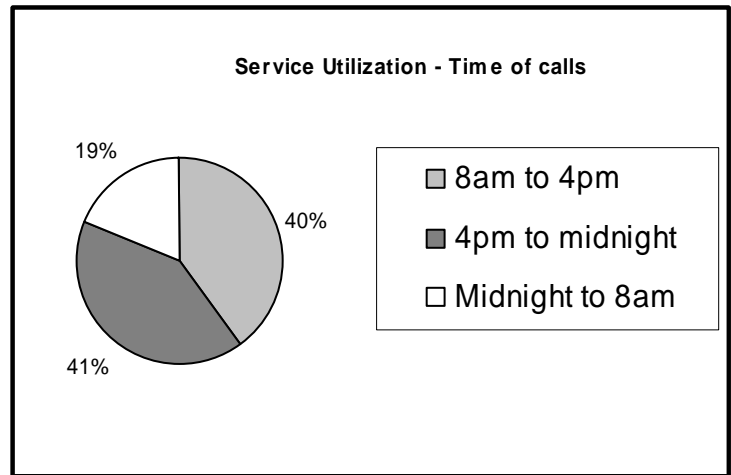
Protection/ Justice/ Safety

These calls include a broad range of concerns regarding civil disputes, landlord/tenant issues, crime concerns, the justice system, as well as divorce, custody and access issues.

CONNECTING PEOPLE TO RESOURCES

NEED serves the critical function of connecting each individual to the resource they need, when they need it, around the clock, throughout the region.

70% of NEED's service is delivered outside regular business hours, including weekends and statutory holidays.



Access to the Crisis Line

NEED's 24 hour phone lines are extremely busy and at times it can be difficult to get through to a volunteer. An emergency access system (EAS) allows a caller to leave a message when lines are busy.

Volunteers respond to these messages within 30 minutes. In times of distress or crisis, this can be critical.

EAS guarantees access to NEED and Emergency resources. Nearly 65 % of these calls concern acute emotional distress, depression, mental illness and suicide with 31 % referred on to emergency resources.

EAS ensured that callers in crisis received immediate emotional support from a crisis line volunteer. Of callers who left a message and were contacted by a NEED volunteer, 69% did not require additional crisis intervention services at the end of the call, affirming the volunteer's ability to accurately assess risk and de-escalate distress.

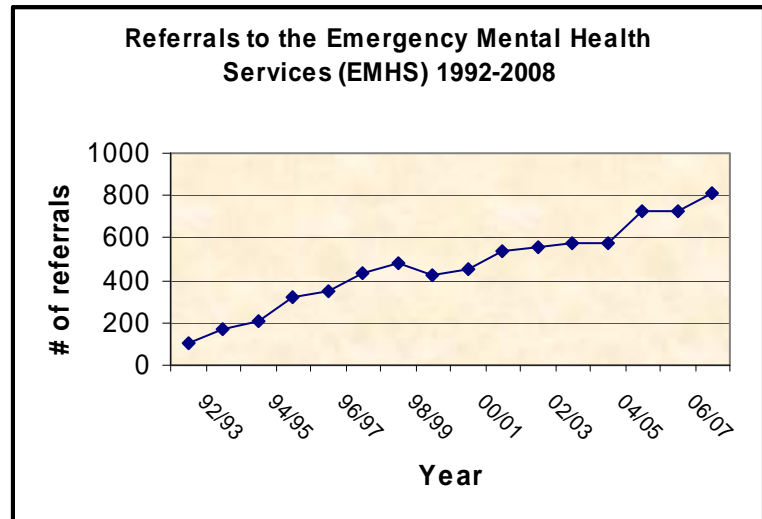
However, there is a significantly higher level of acuity in these message callbacks, compared with total incoming calls. 31% of returned EAS calls were referred to emergency resources, including Police, Hospital, Emergency Mental Health, and the Sexual Assault Response Team compared with only 8% of total incoming calls.

Access to Emergency Mental Health Services (EMHS)

It is critical that the public can access specialized services in acute situations. NEED volunteers consult with, and refer people in psychiatric crisis to EMHS, the mobile, psychiatric response team from 1:00 PM to midnight, 7 days a week.

The number of times NEED volunteers contacted EMHS increased by over 10% in the past year year.

The partnership between NEED and EMHS has been strengthened by close staff communication, advanced volunteer training, and volunteer consultation with EMHS staff on difficult issues.



This 16 year partnership is cited as a model for public service/non-profit service delivery in BC's Best Practices for Mental Health Crisis Response/ Emergency Services and has been emulated in many communities regionally and nationally.

Access to Sexual Assault Response Teams (SART)

For over four years NEED has partnered with the Womens' Sexual Assault Centre, with NEED volunteers answering the Sexual Assault Crisis Line. The calls to that line are forwarded to NEED outside business hours, and volunteers provide support and connects the caller to the Sexual Assault Response Team when required.

"You have helped me through difficult moments which tend to occur in the stillness and quiet of the wee hours, when most people are sound asleep."



Access to Information

The community and public services in this region address a broad spectrum of needs. Finding the right service at the right time is important. Since its' inception, NEED has maintained a comprehensive base of information about community resources which volunteers use to help callers find the resources they need, when they need it. People can either phone for assistance in finding a resource or search the database of community resource information that is available on NEED's website at www.needcrisis.bc.ca. Both service delivery methods are available around the clock.

People call NEED seeking information on community services, and volunteers help them determine resource options. In 2007/08, volunteers gave over 3,040 resource contacts to callers, a slight proportional increase over the previous year. Statistics on the most frequently requested referral information have remained consistent over the past few years. Resource information was most frequently provided in the following areas: counselling, mental health/illness, violence/abuse, dependencies, basic needs, and physical health.

Increasingly people are turning to the internet for information. There has been a monthly average of 250 searches for community information on NEED's website. This average is increasing annually and we are working to make the resource directory more prominent and available online.

Access for Survivors of Suicide

Losing a loved one through suicide is a tragedy. Survivors of suicide require unique information and access to specialized resources that are sensitive to their needs. NEED provides immediate emotional support and maintains up-to-date resource information to anyone coping with the suicide of a loved one. A resource and information pamphlet to be given out by first responders is distributed to agencies involved at the time of death. This information is also available on NEED's website.

YOUTH SERVICES

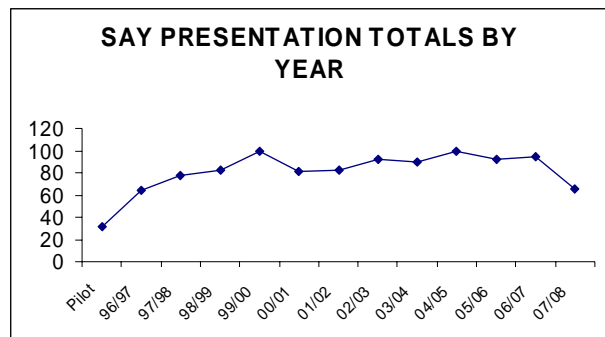
Over the past 11 years NEED has pursued youth suicide prevention initiatives which have resulted in the development and implementation of the **Suicide Awareness for Youth Program (SAY)**, the **Peer Gatekeeper Program**, the **Youth Line** and **Youthspace.ca**.

SUICIDE AWARENESS FOR YOUTH (SAY)

SAY is a volunteer delivered prevention education program available to all Middle and High schools in the Capital Region and to groups of out of school youth. The program focuses on enabling youth to feel empowered when dealing with suicidal thoughts or a suicidal friend through facilitated discussion, video and small group work and the creation of an open and safe environment in which youth are able to explore the perceptions, fears, myths and realities of suicide. Specifically, SAY teaches youth about suicide risk factors, signals of suicide, how to talk to a troubled friend, and where to get help.

The workshop presentation and video were updated this year.

Our SAY program is well utilized by both public and private schools and other audiences including university and college campuses, alternative schools and youth groups.



SAY volunteers are energetic and compassionate individuals who facilitate safe and engaging discussions on the topic of youth suicide prevention. They invite youth to challenge the taboo surrounding suicide and mental illness, while gaining awareness and skills to assist a friend who may be feeling suicidal.

This year, one training group was held, bringing together new volunteers from the community as well as volunteers from the lines. Training includes current information from research and practice in youth mental health, suicidality, and self-injury. Ongoing mentoring and supervision throughout the school year provides continued support for SAY volunteers.

This year volunteers delivered 66 presentations. Since the program was piloted in 1996, volunteers have given 1054 presentations and reached over 25,000 youth.

Suicide is the second leading cause of death among youth
aged 15 to 24 in Canada.

SCHOOL BASED GATEKEEPER TRAINING PROGRAM

NEED continues to offer a limited number of the Peer Gatekeeper Training sessions free to youth peer helper groups in Greater Victoria. This skills-based training program teaches youth peer helpers in grades 8-12 how to assess risk for suicide and initiate an intervention. The program makes use of a variety of teaching techniques to help youth understand suicide and prepare them to be first responders to peers in crisis.

This year NEED developed and is piloting gatekeeping presentations for parents and for school personnel.

YOUTH LINE (386-TALK)

The Youth Line is open between the hours of 4pm - 10pm, seven days a week. The volunteers on the Youth Line have demonstrated incredible commitment and dedication to providing a peer to peer, confidential service to youth. This year 21 youth answered calls on the Youth Line. Youth Line volunteers continue to receive calls from peers and adults concerned about a broad range of issues. It is clear that the Youth Line is receiving a declining volume of calls, and a review done in 2006 found that youth are moving away from using the phone to seek help and moving toward online support.

YOUTHSPACE.CA

Recognizing that many youth go online to communicate with friends, get support and find information, NEED partnered with Pacific Centre Family Services Association and was successfully in getting funding from United Way to pilot an online support service for youth.

youthspace.ca is a web portal that offers private chats, a public forum and email to youth looking for support. It targets youth in the Greater Victoria area and will offer links and bridging to other services.

VOLUNTEER SERVICE DELIVERY

NEED continues to be honoured with an extremely skilled, conscientious, and dedicated group of volunteers. Our volunteers provide a listening ear for the public, continuing to help callers in need of support, risk assessment, and community resources. Our volunteers also maintain their pivotal role in emergency response services. This includes acting as the public access point for Emergency Mental Health Services & Sexual Assault Response Teams (after hours); reporting any abuse or neglect of children or vulnerable adults; and managing urgent calls requiring crisis intervention.

NEED continues to ensure that volunteers receive the level of training and support required to sustain them in handling the complexity of calls that are received on the crisis line.

Volunteers contributed a total of 12,195 hours of time to provide line coverage. Shift coverage increased over the year.

Six training groups this year brought 63 new volunteers on the lines. NEED tried something new this year, a condensed training group. Volunteer feedback has indicated this was successful. Many volunteers participated in additional training for providing chat support on-line.

The Volunteer Services team has worked very hard this year to build on its strong rapport with our existing volunteers. Ongoing communication with volunteers allows us to continually recognize the work that they do. We continue to explore initiatives to recruit additional volunteers and encourage retention. An expanded commitment is now available for those people unable to take on overnight shifts.

The incredible dedication of each individual volunteer is what keeps “the fine heart of listening” beating, and continues to make possible the high quality service that NEED provides. An overwhelming thanks to all our volunteers for all that they do in support of our community.



You help me process my anxiety. It is always helpful talking to you guys. You know how to listen. Talking to you prevents how I'm feeling getting into a crisis.”

COMMITMENT TO QUALITY

ONGOING VOLUNTEER TRAINING AND COMMITMENT

Once on the lines, volunteers attend monthly advanced training sessions on key topics. Included this year were sessions on Follow up and Outreach, Effects of Trauma, Psychiatric Risk Assessment, Addictions, Mental Health System, EMHS and On Line Support for Youth. These training opportunities are important for volunteers as they continue development of their knowledge and skills.

Experienced volunteers can participate in extended roles within the agency providing them with opportunities for further skill development and new ways to give to the community. Included are: Suicide Awareness for Youth (SAY) presentations in the schools, screening of potential volunteers, 24-Hour on-call support to the volunteers on the phone line, online chat support, and informing the public about volunteer opportunities.

NEED is proud of the combination of skill, enthusiasm and commitment of our volunteers. Callers frequently call back with words of thanks for the help and support they received. NEED's service partners commend the work volunteers do on the phone lines. Volunteers take their increased skills in communication and crisis intervention into their families and workplaces, enriching the community's capacity for caring for each other.

COMMUNITY TRAINING

Experienced professional trainers from NEED offer workshops on Communication Skills, and Suicide Awareness Prevention and Risk Assessment to a broad spectrum of community services on a fee for service basis.

In 2007/08 NEED delivered workshops to groups at BC Senior's Line, Capital Mental Health Association, Greater Victoria Police Victims' Services, Single Parent Resource Centre, University of Victoria Peer Helpers, Camosun College Peer Connections, BC Cancer Society, and the John Howard Society.

NEED's expertise in suicide prevention and intervention has developed over the past 36 years. Gatekeeper training to key groups has been demonstrated to be an effective suicide prevention strategy. NEED is planning to increase its work in this area, and this year began a project to develop and deliver training for key gatekeepers who are involved with seniors .

DEMONSTRATED LEADERSHIP

NEED is a recognized leader in crisis line services in BC. We have been accredited by the American Association of Suicidology since 1995, the standard setting organization for crisis services in North America, and received a 5 year reaccreditation in June of last year.

This past year:

NEED is represented on the Executive of the Crisis Line Association of BC (CLABC) which became a registered society in 2007.

NEED continues as an active partner in the 1-800-SUICIDE network, one of five crisis lines responding to calls made to 1-800-SUICIDE in B.C. NEED is represented on the SNAP steering committee, working towards a Single Access Number to crisis lines across BC.

NEED partnered with the campus based Suicide Prevention Action Group, coordinating events for World Suicide Awareness Week.

NEED continues its successful partnerships with Emergency Mental Health Services and Womens' Sexual Assault Centre, and has initiated a new partnership with the Pacific Centre Family Services Association.

NEED continues to integrate new technologies when they will improve service, create efficiencies or support the volunteer role and experience.

" I went through a particularly excruciating breakup over the past month and a half, and things got really bad at certain points. I was concerned about what I would do and who I could talk to in my moments of extreme need. I didn't have the money or the insurance to get more than a single session of professional counselling.



So you, NEED, constituted my primary support system during the many evenings, sometimes night after night, when I needed someone to talk to. You listened to me while I worked through my thoughts aloud and sorted my way through a great deal of pain, confusion and complicated feelings.

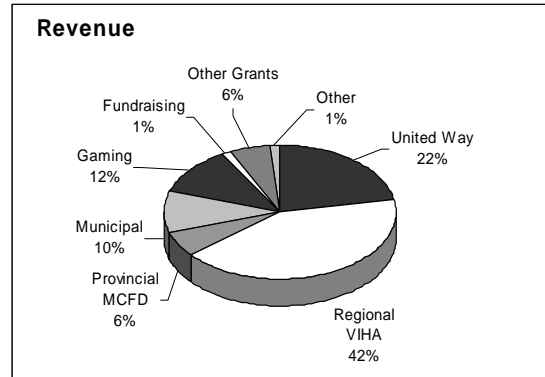
So, thanks. You guys really came through for me"

REVENUES & EXPENDITURES

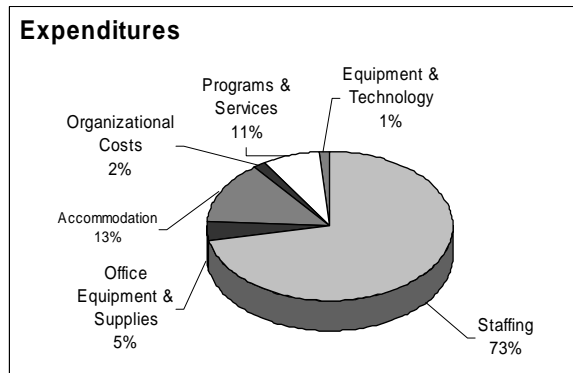
Statement of Operations and Net Assets			
For the year ended March 31, 2007			
Revenue		2008	2007
Vancouver Island Health Authority		\$ 239,233	\$ 239,233
United Way		\$ 145,011	\$ 126,465
Gaming		\$ 68,900	\$ 67,026
Municipal grants		\$ 66,548	\$ 57,599
Ministry of Children and Family Development		\$ 42,737	\$ 36,000
Other grants		\$ 20,195	\$ 31,553
Donations and fundraising		\$ 7,558	\$ 7,364
Other income		\$ 1,414	\$ 3,186
Workshops		\$ 1,756	\$ 2,681
Sale of Guides/training fee		\$ 2,215	\$ 2,535
		\$595,567	\$573,642
Expenses			
Advertising		\$ 13,470	\$ 14,845
Amortization		\$ 5,269	\$ 3,095
Audit		\$ 2,575	\$ 3,079
Education		\$ 2,173	\$ 2,931
Equipment		\$ 6,427	\$ 5,830
Fundraising		\$ 37	\$ 600
Insurance		\$ 4,187	\$ 4,187
Janitorial		\$ 3,145	\$ 3,325
Maintenance		\$ 5,524	\$ 5,092
Memberships dues and publications		\$ 4,858	\$ 1,293
Miscellaneous		\$ 8,568	\$ 5,744
Office and postage		\$ 4,367	\$ 5,982
Rent		\$ 66,852	\$ 67,004
Salaries and benefits		\$363,782	\$388,506
Stationery		\$ 7,658	\$ 6,356
Technology costs		\$ 10,280	\$ 3,862
Telephone		\$ 12,452	\$ 15,169
Travel		\$ 2,092	\$ 3,218
Volunteer expenses		\$ 5,741	\$ 6,920
Workshops		\$ -	\$ 1,188
Youthspace partnership		\$ 46,561	\$ -
		\$576,018	\$548,226
Excess Of Revenues Over Expenses For The Year		\$ 19,549	\$ 25,416
Net Assets, beginning of year		\$ 140,493	\$ 115,459
Net Assets, end of year		\$ 160,042	\$ 140,493

NEED receives funding from a variety of sources. Over the past three years most key funders have maintained their level of funding to NEED. However, all area municipalities have increased or initiated funding support during that time.

NEED has been able to improve its financial position and ensure that funds are available to protect the agency, cover its liabilities, and provide for unanticipated contingencies.



NEED's expenditures reflect the nature of its operation. Staffing costs make up the largest proportion of costs. Other costs specific to the delivery of core services (crisis line telephones, service advertising) and to volunteer support are reflected in the Programs and Services category.



Service improvements have resulted from changing technologies. Equipment and technology costs have an ongoing maintenance and replacement component which requires ongoing annual expenditures.

A GIVING COMMUNITY

THANKS TO THE GENEROSITY OF THE COMMUNITY...

...there is always someone to pick up the phone

NEED would like to acknowledge the contributions of local businesses and groups who collectively contributed to support the work of NEED volunteers on the lines and the youth oriented projects NEED undertook:

Alliance Atlantis	Needs of Victorians Society
Balance Pilates	Noodle Box
Bear Mountain Resort	Planet Fitness
Bolen Books	R&B Fest 2008
Boston Pizza Hillside	Rogers Chocolates
Brown's the Florist	Royal BC Museum
Butchart Gardens	Serious Coffee
Canadian Tire	Silk Road Tea Company
Christopher Estates Ltd	South Van Isle Lions Club
Cinecenta	The Ashanta Yoga Shala
Cook's Day Off	The Market on Millstream
Gorge Fitness Centre	Thrifty Foods
Harbor Towers	Victoria Bug Zoo
Hotel Grand Pacific	Victoria Symphony
Island Blue Print	Victoria YMCA/YWCA
National Geographic IMAX	Vista 18

along with innumerable individuals who have so generously supported NEED in the past year.

A thank you, as well, to our funding partners:

City of Colwood	Ministry of Children and Family Development
City of Langford	Province of BC-Gaming
City of Victoria	Town of Sidney
District of Central Saanich	Town of View Royal
District of Highlands	Township of Esquimalt
District of Metchosin	United Way of Greater Victoria
District of North Saanich	Vancouver Foundation
District of Oak Bay	Vancouver Island Health Authority
District of Saanich	Victoria Foundation
District of Sooke	

2007/2008 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Ron Pollard

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(as of March 31/08)

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Nadine Groves

Rebecca Hudson Breen

Katherine Cook

Aubrey Baldock

Resigned

Kaleen Mountain

Office & Information Services

Dallas Atkins

Jordana Duffy

Volunteer Services

Jordana Duffy

Kaleen Mountain

Mary Rumsby

Youthspace Project

Mark Nixon

Janitorial

Jeff Breen

MISSION STATEMENT

NEED supports the well-being of the community by offering emotional support, crisis intervention, and information with concern and respect.

**NEED Crisis and Information Line is accredited
by the American Association of Suicidology (AAS)**

*Thank you for supporting
NEED Crisis and Information Line and
the United Way*



United Way
OF GREATER VICTORIA
COMMUNITY PARTNER

NEED Crisis & Information Line
P.O.Box 5501
Victoria, B.C. V8R 6S4
Administrative Office: 250-386-6328/ Fax:250-386-9748
www.needcrisis.bc.ca

24-Hour Crisis & Information Line:
250-386-6323 1-866-386-6323 Gulf Islands

Youth Line: 250-386-TALK (8255)

www.youthspace.ca

1-800-SUICIDE